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SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/BURMA: CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR  
HURRICANE VICTIMS

REF: A. SECSTATE 59122

[1](#)B. COPE-FALLS E-MAIL 6/3/08

[1](#)1. Summary: On June 3, PolOff shared reftel A points to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As reported in ref B, on May 22, Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Maxime Verhagen strongly spoke against the actions of the Burmese regime and the continued delay of aid in the wake of Cyclone Nargis. On May 26, Minister for Development Cooperation Bert Koenders discussed the inadequate response of the regime as well as the resolve of the Netherlands to set aside aid for the Burmese. End Summary.

[1](#)2. Verhagen comments: Verhagen addressed the UN Security Council in New York, noting the obligation of the international community as well as the Burmese regime in assisting the Burmese people. Verhagen stated that a government is tasked with protecting it's people from harm, whether it be arms, man-made, or by natural disasters. Verhagen further stated that, "Gross negligence and woefully inadequate responses to threats may actually lead to even greater humanitarian suffering," specifically referencing the Burmese regime. This negligence would in turn be cause for the UN Security Council to consider action against the Burmese regime. Before addressing the UN Security Council, Verhagen met with UN SGY Ban, pledging Dutch support for the UN mission. Verhagen also approved of the UN decision to pressure the Burmese regime to improve their aid operations.

[1](#)3. Koenders discussion: At a dialogue attended by representatives of Denmark, Finland, Germany, Luxembourg, Portugal, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, Koenders discussed the actions of the UN and the Netherlands in regards to Burma. Koenders stated that the Netherlands is prepared to set aside more funds for a humanitarian situation he calls "disastrous." Echoing the comments of Verhagen, Koenders called the response by the Burmese regime, "totally inadequate."  
Foster